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HIV/AIDS Rates by Race/Ethnicity in the 25 Highest HIV Prevalence Counties
in Michigan: Focus on Hispanics

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As of April 1, 2007, there are 12,764 people who were living in the state of Michigan at the time of their HIV diagnosis (PLWHA) (0.13% of the general population). However, among some racial/ethnic minorities, the rate at which people are acquiring HIV is disproportionate. For example, blacks comprise 14% of the state's population and 59% of the state's HIV/AIDS cases with a rate of 534 HIV/AIDS cases per 100,000 persons. By comparison, whites comprise 79% of the state's population and 36% of the state's HIV/AIDS cases with a rate of 58 HIV/AIDS cases per 100,000 persons. The percentage of population vs. percentage of PLWHA in the other racial/ethnic groups is more comparable. For example, Hispanics comprise 3% of the general population and 4% of PLWHA and have a rate of 151 HIV/AIDS cases per 100,000 persons. Table 1 below shows this information for the 25 counties with the highest total number of living HIV/AIDS cases in the un-incarcerated population, based on residence at diagnosis.

Hispanics could be under represented in the HIV/AIDS surveillance system due to the potential of ethnic misclassification. Differences in the assessment and collection of race and ethnicity by health care providers may contribute to ethnic misclassification. Therefore, when assessing the extent of the epidemic among Hispanics in Michigan, several questions arise:

- 1) How completely and accurately are Hispanics included in the census?
- 2) Are migrant workers included in the census?
- 3) How much of the migrant population is Hispanic?
- 4) How much HIV infection occurs in the migrant population?
- 5) Do Hispanics in the general population and migrant workers get tested for HIV more or less frequently than blacks or whites?
- 6) To what extent is the Hispanic migrant population integrated with the general Hispanic population in the counties in Michigan with the highest Hispanic rates?
- 7) How completely and accurately is Hispanic ethnicity being recorded in the HIV/AIDS case report?

Of the 25 counties in Michigan with the highest HIV prevalence rates, only 8 counties had enough Hispanic cases to calculate a reliable rate (i.e., 10 or more cases). All 8 of these counties had HIV/AIDS Hispanic rates higher than the county rate for whites living with HIV/AIDS. Also, five of these had HIV/AIDS rates for Hispanics that are close to or greater than the overall statewide rate of 128.2 per 100,000 persons, these are: Ingham (148.2), Kent (219.0), Oakland (158.6), Washtenaw (203.6), and Wayne (209.8). (Table 1 and graph)

In Michigan, a more thorough evaluation of HIV/AIDS in the Hispanic community is necessary to better characterize the epidemic affecting this population. While racial and ethnic disparities in health and healthcare continue to persist in the United States, a better understanding of the factors that contribute to these disparities will aid in closing the gap. Continued support of activities that further characterize HIV disease in specific populations will be the key to understanding these disparities and making future recommendations to eliminate them.

Table 1-Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the 25 Counties of Highest HIV Prevalence in Michigan*, as of April 1, 2007

County	HIV Rate for All Races	Number HIV + Hispanic	Percent HIV + Hispanic	Hispanic rate per 100,000	2000 Census Hispanic Pop	Number HIV + Black	Percent HIV + Black	Black rate per 100,000	2000 Census Black Pop	Number HIV + White	Percent HIV + White	White rate per 100,000	2000 Census White Pop	Number of PLWHA
Allegan	67.2	5	7%	**	6,040	7	10%	**	1,315	57	80%	59.3	96,167	71
Bay	49.0	<5	**	**	4,308	7	13%	**	1,343	42	78%	41.1	102,119	54
Berrien	130.5	9	4%	**	4,888	143	67%	555.8	25,729	58	27%	45.7	126,798	212
Calhoun	72.5	0	0%	**	4,351	41	41%	274.9	14,912	58	58%	51.0	113,723	100
Clinton	46.3	0	0%	**	1,688	7	23%	**	401	23	77%	37.4	61,416	30
Eaton	43.4	<5	**	**	3,323	9	20%	**	5,397	31	69%	33.7	91,895	45
Genesee	102.0	10	2%	98.5	10,152	219	49%	247.9	88,356	209	47%	64.7	323,136	445
Grand Traverse	57.9	<5	**	**	1,155	0	0%	**	295	41	91%	55.2	74,258	45
Ingham	127.8	24	7%	148.2	16,190	124	35%	417.3	29,712	199	56%	92.7	214,685	357
Jackson	70.7	<5	**	**	3,493	22	20%	177.5	12,396	87	78%	62.8	138,528	112
Kalamazoo	106.5	7	3%	**	6,311	94	37%	409.3	22,968	151	59%	75.8	199,180	254
Kent	117.7	88	13%	219.0	40,183	231	34%	462.1	49,994	344	51%	74.6	461,162	676
Lenawee	45.5	<5	**	**	6,884	<5	**	**	2,033	37	82%	42.0	88,188	45
Livingston	25.5	<5	**	**	1,953	<5	**	**	716	36	90%	23.8	151,170	40
Macomb	61.3	12	2%	96.5	12,435	109	23%	515.3	21,151	352	73%	48.8	721,882	483
Monroe	34.9	<5	**	**	3,110	<5	**	**	2,686	45	88%	32.8	137,391	51
Muskegon	59.3	5	5%	**	6,001	47	47%	196.1	23,971	45	45%	33.2	135,379	101
Oakland	113.8	46	3%	158.6	28,999	489	36%	408.5	119,708	797	59%	82.0	971,752	1,359
Ottawa	36.9	12	14%	71.9	16,692	9	10%	**	2,380	61	69%	28.9	211,058	88
Saginaw	70.0	7	5%	**	14,075	81	55%	209.4	38,675	55	37%	36.2	151,977	147
St. Clair	49.9	0	0%	**	3,593	16	20%	473.2	3,381	62	76%	40.3	153,893	82
St. Joseph	44.9	6	21%	**	2,488	5	18%	**	1,561	17	61%	29.8	56,994	28
Van Buren	56.4	9	21%	**	5,634	7	16%	**	3,939	27	63%	41.9	64,466	43
Washtenaw	128.5	18	4%	203.6	8,839	160	39%	406.9	39,326	133	32%	54.3	245,033	415
Wayne	303.1	162	3%	209.8	77,207	4975	80%	575.4	864,627	1035	17%	100.6	1,028,984	6,248
Rest of MI	68.5	54	4%	159.4	33,885	681	55%	2715.9	25,075	581	47%	34.5	1,685,457	1,233
Statewide	128.4	490	4%	151.3	323,877	7,488	59%	534.1	1,402,047	4,583	36%	58.7	7,806,691	12,764

**Counties of highest prevalence were determined by selecting the 25 counties with the highest number of living cases by residence at HIV/AIDS diagnosis (excludes prison cases).*

*** Rates are only calculated for categories greater than or equal to 10 because small numbers create unstable rates.*

Together Blacks, Hispanics and Whites comprise 98% of all PLWHA in the state of Michigan (with Blacks comprising 59%, Hispanics comprising 4% and Whites comprising 36%).

HIV/AIDS Prevalence Rates by Race/Ethnicity in the 25 Counties of Highest HIV Prevalence in Michigan, April 1, 2007

